Policy and Guidelines on the Use of Analgesics in Laboratory Animals

**Background**

Animal welfare regulations require that procedures involving animals take measures to avoid or minimize discomfort, distress, and pain to the animals. If procedures involve more than momentary or slight pain or discomfort to animals, regulations require the appropriate use of sedatives, anesthetics, or analgesics, unless withholding of such agents is scientifically justified in writing and approved by the BGU institutional animal care and use committee (IACUC).

References:

2. Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (NRC, 1996)
3. Animal Welfare Regulations (9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter A)
Policy
Animals that may experience more than momentary or slight pain or distress require appropriate use of anxiolytics, sedatives, analgesics, and/or anesthetics unless suitable scientific justification (e.g. interference with the intended results of the study) is documented in writing and approved beforehand by the BGU IACUC. Assessment of pain and distress in animals is often difficult and may be subjective. As such, procedures that cause pain or distress in humans are to be assumed to cause similar effects in animals, unless the contrary is established. The attending veterinarian has the authority to ensure the provision of adequate sedation, analgesia, or anesthesia. This policy is applicable to all live vertebrate animals with the exception of fish/amphibians, because the efficacy and impact of analgesics are not well defined in such animals.

The use of analgesia anesthesia or sedation is required but not limited to the following situations:
1. Administration of analgesics for postoperative care is required for a minimum of 72 hours.
2. Administration of drugs to treat pain and/or distress associated with non-surgical procedures such as rodent retro-orbital bleed, rabbit bleed, tail clipping for rodents over 3 weeks of age.

Please consult the attending veterinarian for the choice of drugs, dose range, and route prior to submission of your application.

References:
5. Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (NRC, 1996)
6. Animal Welfare Regulations (9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter A)